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## REPORT OF THE FELLOW IN AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY

*To the Committee on American Archaeology:*

GENTLEMEN,—As holder of the Fellowship in American Archaeology, I have the honor to present to you a preliminary report of the work done during the last half of the third year and the first half of the fourth year of the Fellowship.

On my return from the third season of field work in May, 1904, I devoted the succeeding months to a search in all the accessible accounts of the early explorers and missionaries, for descriptions of ceremonies and customs native to Yucatan and the northern part of Central America at the time of the Conquest. The results of this search have been many and varied, and they cover an ethnological field of wide range. My aim in this work has been to trace survivals of these rites and customs among the people now occupying this same stretch of territory.

The points thus found, together with my field notes up to the beginning of the fourth year, have been worked up in full. This long report and the photographs taken during the various expeditions are already in your hands.

As preliminary to the field work of the fourth year, and owing to the kindness of the Chairman of your Committee, I was in attendance for two months on the lectures of Dr. Franz Boas and Mr. A. F. Bandelier at Columbia University. It was through the suggestions made by Dr. Boas that I was enabled to work up, in a more thorough manner than before, the linguistic material collected during the first three years of the Fellowship. This part of the work probably will be pub-

lished separately from the purely ethnological and archaeological material which I have collected.

The field work of the fourth year of the Fellowship began on December 28, 1904, when I sailed from New York for Yucatan. I returned on May 22 of the present year. The season of field work was divided, as in the two previous years, between the district of Chiapas, Mexico, and northern Guatemala, and that of Yucatan.

The first part of the time was spent in making a trip up the Usumacinta, the Lacantun, and the Tzendales rivers, visiting the few settlements of Lacandones along the banks, and thus enabling myself to verify for a wide range of country the material previously collected in a relatively small territory.

I was more and more impressed with the many striking survivals of the ancient culture as described by the early Spanish historians. These survivals are far more than casual, and there is hardly a point in the elaborate ritual now carried on by the Lacandones, and in part by the Mayas of Yucatan, that does not find its counterpart in the rites and customs described as carried on at the time of the Conquest.

The fact of the inability of the Mayas or the Lacandones to give any adequate explanation of the remains of the hieroglyphic writing found in the country occupied by them, seems to show that this people are the descendants of the "gente rustica" of the former population, since a knowledge of the system of hieroglyphic writing is believed to have been known only by the priestly class. My endeavor to find some old member of the tribe who might have had for an ancestor one of this more favored class has been in vain.

I was fortunate in finding on the Rio Colorado, one of the affluents of the Tzendales River which flows into the Lacantun and this in turn unites with the Chixoy or Salinas to form the Usumacinta, a group of ruins hitherto unknown. They consist of five buildings of faced stone, and all are in a good state of preservation, in addition to a large number of mounds the superstructures of which have fallen completely in ruins.

The buildings still standing contain carved stone lintels, and one elaborately worked stela in low relief was found. This was not in its original position, but was leaning up against the inner walls of one of the rooms. Before this carved stone six of the incense-burners of the Lacandonos of the present day were arranged, and the whole room showed the effects of the burning of incense. The lintels and this stela bear hieroglyphics, and a more extended exploration than that which I was able to give would doubtless reveal many more sculptured stones. The plans and elevation of the buildings, and drawings of the glyphs, will be presented in full at a later time.

On my return northward, I visited three different localities where different dialects of the Maya family are spoken: the Tzeltal, used near Ocosingo, Chiapas; the Chol, spoken near Palenque in the same state; and the Chontal, of the region of San Juan Bautista in Tabasco. Little linguistic work has been done on any of these dialects, although for comparative purposes these are most valuable. With this material I am able more readily to make clear certain points in regard to the main body of my linguistic data, which is on the Maya as spoken in Yucatan. In the short report of the last preceding year, I gave a brief review of some of the more important points which have come up during the progress of the work. I shall not attempt to enlarge upon these at this time, as they, together with those of the past year of field work, will be treated exhaustively in the long report which will cover the four years of the Fellowship, and which I hope shortly to place in your hands.

In addition to working up the new material, I am at present engaged in making an exhaustive bibliography of Mexico and Central America, and especially that part of the territory embraced in the Maya culture.

Respectfully submitted,

ALFRED M. TOZZER.

PEABODY MUSEUM, CAMBRIDGE,  
*September 12, 1905.*